

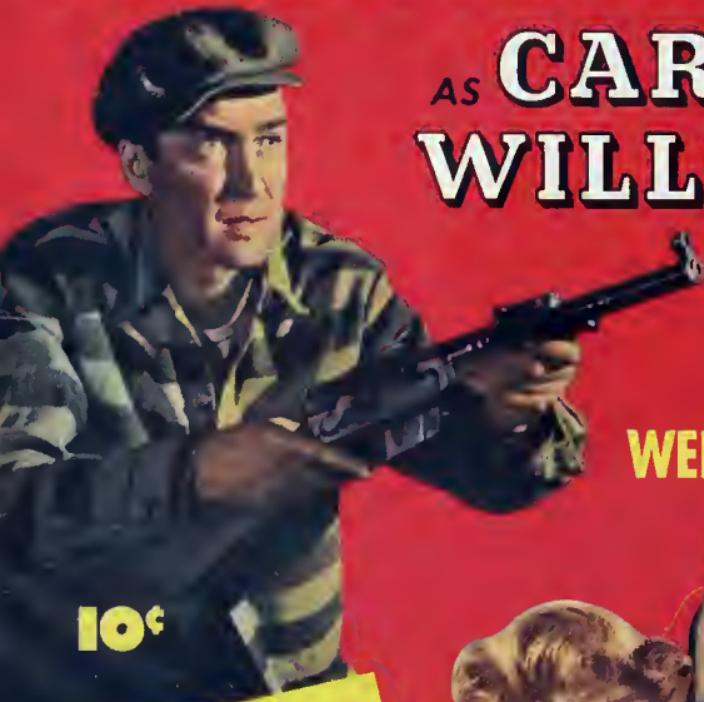
FAWCETT MOVIE COMIC

M-G-M Presents

NO. 19 OCT.

JAMES STEWART

AS CARBINE WILLIAMS



CO-STARRING

JEAN HAGEN WENDELL COREY

10¢

Story and Screen Play by
ART COHN

Directed by
RICHARD THORPE

Produced by
ARMAND DEUTSCH

A
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER
PICTURE

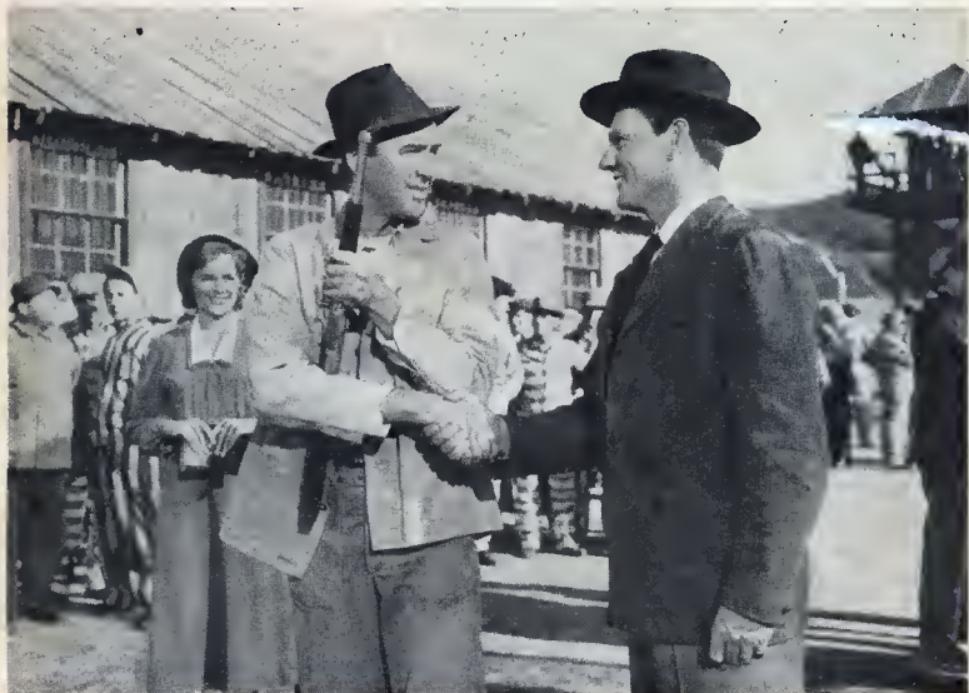




Out of the depths of degradation his sterling spirit rose to new heights through the friendship of a man who was once his enemy! M-G-M Presents . . .

JAMES STEWART as CARBINE WILLIAMS

co-starring JEAN HAGEN • WENDELL COREY A Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Picture





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CAST OF "CARBINE WILLIAMS"

MARSH WILLIAMS.....	JAMES STEWART
MAGGIE WILLIAMS.....	JEAN HAGEN
CAPT. H. T. PEOPLES.....	WENDELL COREY
CLAUDE WILLIAMS.....	CARL BENTON-REID
"DUTCH" KRUGER.....	PAUL STEWART
MORLEY.....	OTTO HULETT
REDWICK KARSON.....	RHYS WILLIAMS
LIONEL DANIELS.....	HERBERT HEYES
LEON WILLIAMS.....	JAMES ARNESS
	DAVID WILLIAMS

SAM MARKLEY.....	PORTER HALL
DISTRICT ATTORNEY.....	FAY ROOPE
ANDREW WHITE.....	RALPH DUMKE
FEDER.....	LEIF ERICKSON
BILL STOCKTON.....	HENRY CORDEN
TRUEX.....	FRANK RICHARDS
SHERIFF.....	HOWARD PETRIE
Tom VENNAR.....	STUART RANDALL
JESSE RIMMER.....	DAN RISS
	BOBBY HYATT

CARBINE WILLIAMS



MARSH WILLIAMS LOVED LIFE—AND LIVED IT WITH AN UNTAMED TURBULENCE THAT KNEW NO RESPONSIBILITY AND NO LAW... UNTIL HIS UNBRIDLED RECKLESSNESS DROVE HIM INTO A PRISON CELL!

BUT NOT EVEN THE BRUTAL CLUTCH OF CIRCUMSTANCE COULD GRIND MARSH'S PROUD FREE SPIRIT INTO THE MIRE, FOR IN THE FLAMES OF HIS TORMENT A NEW MAN WAS BORN, STEELED IN HEARTBREAK AND FORGED BY DISASTER! A MAN THE WORLD WOULD COME TO KNOW AND RESPECT AS ONE OF THE GREAT INVENTORS OF HIS TIME—CARBINE WILLIAMS!

IN THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN,
THE HUGE WINCHESTER
REPEATING ARMS COMPANY
COVERS EIGHTY-SEVEN ACRES!



MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE
PLANT...

IT'S COMING ALONG
PRETTY GOOD,
MR. WILLIAMS!

YES,
IT IS!



JUST THEN...

MR. SWANSON WANTS
TO SEE YOU! AND THERE'S
A LONG-DISTANCE PHONE
CALL FOR YOU IN HIS
OFFICE!

THANKS!



IN THE GENERAL MANAGER'S
OFFICE MARSH TALKS ANXI-
OUSLY ON THE PHONE!

NOW, MAGGIE! THERE'S
NOTHING WRONG WITH DAVID
GETTING INTO A FIGHT! IT
HAPPENS TO BOYS ALL
THE TIME! WAS
HE HURT?

NOT
WHERE IT
SHOWS, MARSH!
HE'S HURT DEEP DOWN
INSIDE! HE'S BEEN
HEARING TALK HERE
AT THE SCHOOL—
ABOUT YOU, MARSH!



COME HOME, SOON,
MARSH! HE NEEDS
YOU—TO TALK TO HIM,
TO EXPLAIN!

I UNDER-
STAND,
MAGGIE! I
WAS FIXING
TO GET OUT OF
HERE IN A
COUPLE OF
WEEKS, BUT
I'LL LEAVE
RIGHT
AWAY!



MOMENTS LATER, MARSHALL WILLIAMS
IS REPORTING TO MR. SWANSON!

GREAT NEWS FROM
WASHINGTON,
MARSH! THE
ARMY'S TAKING
THE THIRTY-
O-SIX!

GOOD! I RECKON THEN
YOU WON'T MIND MY
LEAVING FOR A SPELL!
THEY NEED ME DOWN
HOME!



BUT WE NEED YOU HERE! WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO OUR DEAD-LINE ON THE TWENTY-GAUGE. IT'S YOUR BABY; YOU'VE GOT TO SEE IT THROUGH!

MY WORK IS DONE! THE DRAFTING DEPARTMENT HAS THE DESIGN!

BUT, MARSH, BE REASONABLE! CAN'T THIS BUSINESS AT HOME WAIT FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS?

SORRY, MR. SWANSON! IT'S BEEN WAITING TOO LONG ALREADY!

THREE DAYS LATER FINDS MARSH ALL WILLIAMS GREETING HIS WIFE AT HIS HOME IN THE CAROLINA HILLS!

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK, MAGGIE! WHERE'S DAVID? DIDN'T HE KNOW I WAS DUE?

HE--HE DIDN'T WANT TO BE HERE! IT'S LIKE I TOLD YOU ON THE PHONE, MARSH: THEY'VE BEEN GIVING HIM A ROUGH TIME AT SCHOOL! I ALWAYS FELT WE SHOULD HAVE TOLD HIM!

I GUESS IT WAS MY MISTAKE! I'VE WANTED TO TELL HIM MANY TIMES, BUT I'D GIVE MYSELF THE BEST OF IT--AND THAT'S NO GOOD!

DO YOU WANT ME TO TELL HIM?

NO, MAGGIE! I'M GOING TO LET CAPTAIN PEOPLES TELL HIM; HE'LL GIVE IT TO DAVID WITHOUT FROSTING! I'M CALLING CAP NOW!

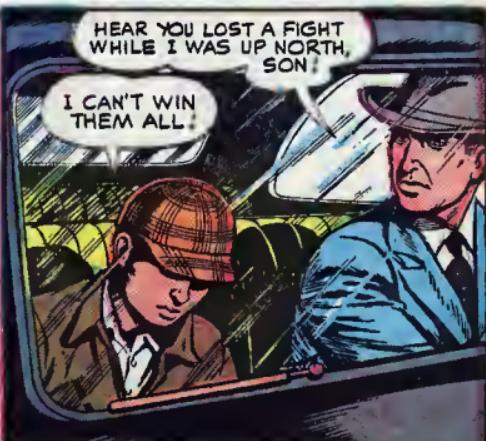
THAT AFTERNOON, MARSH DRIVES THROUGH THE CAROLINA HILLS WITH HIS SON DAVID AT HIS SIDE!

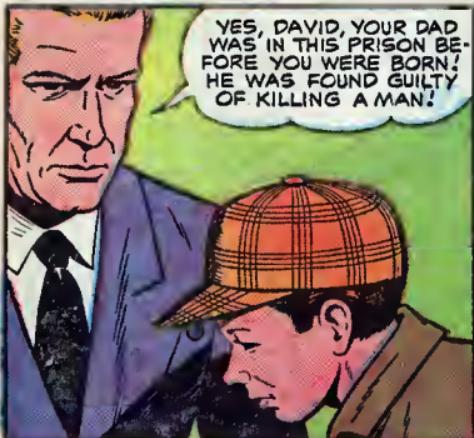
WHERE ARE WE GOING, DAD?

HUNTING QUAIL--AFTER WE MAKE ONE STOP!

HEAR YOU LOST A FIGHT WHILE I WAS UP NORTH, SON!

I CAN'T WIN THEM ALL.





YOUR DAD ALWAYS WANTED TO BE ON HIS OWN, AND THAT'S NOT EASY WHEN YOU'RE ONE OF ELEVEN CHILDREN! THAT'S WHY HE QUIT SCHOOL AND JOINED THE NAVY!

DAD - IN THE NAVY? I DIDN'T KNOW!

YES, BUT AFTER A COUPLE OF HITCHES YOUR DAD FOUND HE WASN'T MADE FOR THE NAVY—OR VICE-VERSA!



AND NOW, WITH CAP PEOPLES TALKING, DAVID LISTENED AND HIS MIND SAW THE PICTURES CLEARLY—THE DAY HIS FATHER, MARSHALL WILLIAMS, RETURNED HOME FROM THE NAVY!



LATER, IN THE KITCHEN... THERE'S A BIGGER REASON FOR MY COMING BACK, POP! I'M GOING TO MARRY MAGGIE! WE'RE SETTING THE DATE WHEN I GO OVER TO HER PLACE TOMORROW!



HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND? YOU CAN'T EVEN SUPPORT YOURSELF, LET ALONE A WIFE!

BUT, DAD, YOU ALWAYS SAID YOU'D GIVE ME A SHARE OF THE FARM—LIKE THE OTHER BOYS!

YOU'LL EARN YOUR SHARE THE SAME AS YOUR BROTHERS! WORK THE LAND TWO YEARS, AND IT'S YOURS! REMEMBER, SON, YOU HAVEN'T PROVED YOU'RE READY FOR RESPONSIBILITY!

THE WAY YOU QUIT SCHOOL TO JOIN THE NAVY—AND NOW YOU'RE QUITTING THE NAVY!

NO, MARSH! TWO YEARS OR YOU GET NO LAND!

I'M NOT WAITING TWO YEARS TO MARRY MAGGIE. YOU CAN KEEP MY SHARE OF THE LAND!



THE NEXT DAY MAGGIE AND MARSH WENT WALKING IN THE WOODS!

MARSH, YOUR DAD'S RIGHT! SOME DAY YOU'LL HAVE TO STOP BEING A CHILD! HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF IT?

YES! THAT'S WHY I RAN AWAY FROM HOME! BECAUSE I WANTED TO STAY YOUNG INSIDE AND THEY WOULDN'T LET ME! THEY WANTED ME TO GO TO SCHOOL OR STAY AT HOME AND CHOP COTTON!



ONE THING YOU'VE GOT TO BE GROWNUP ABOUT, MARSH! ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO MARRY ME?

WE SAID WE'D BE MARRIED WHEN I GOT BACK! I'M HOLDING YOU TO YOUR PROMISE!



AND YOU'D RATHER HAVE GONE HUNTING OR FISHING! OH, MARSH, SOONER OR LATER YOU'VE GOT TO GROW UP AND BE SOMEBODY!

YOU'VE GOT TO BE YOURSELF! A MAN'S LIKE A STALK OF CORN, MAG! AT A CERTAIN AGE HE TASSLES OUT—AND NOT BEFORE!



BUT AS HER LIPS REACH UPWARD, EAGER FOR HIS KISS, THE EVER-BOYISH MARSH STOOD ERECT!



GOT HIM!

HE'LL ALWAYS BE A BOY AT HEART!

BAM!



AND SO IT WAS THAT MARSH MARRIED THE GIRL WHO WOULD ALWAYS UNDERSTAND HIM! AND A WEEK AFTER HIS MARRIAGE HE WAS WORKING ON A RAILROAD GANG!

FOURTEEN CENTS AN HOUR IS MIGHTY THIN WAGES FOR SWINGING THIS HAMMER!

I CAN PUT YOU NEXT TO SOME EASY MONEY! DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BOILERS?



BOILERS? SURE, I WORKED ON BOILERS IN THE NAVY! BOILERS, MOTORS, GUNS—I CAN HANDLE ANYTHING MECHANICAL!

ALL RIGHT, MARSH! MEET ME AFTER SUPPER AT CARSON'S BARN IN FAYETTEVILLE!



THAT NIGHT IN MARSH'S HOUSE...

I VISITED YOUR FAMILY TODAY. YOUR DAD'S PROUD OF THE WAY YOU'RE HOLDING DOWN THAT RAILROAD JOB! I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE'S WAITING FOR YOU TO ASK FOR YOUR SHARE OF THE LAND!

I'M NOT ASKING HIM FOR ANYTHING, MAG! I'LL GET UP IN THE WORLD ON MY OWN!



LATER, IN CARSON'S BARN AT FAYETTEVILLE...

CARSON THINKS HE CAN GIVE YOU A JOB! THIRTY-FIVE CENTS AN HOUR TO START!

MAKING STILLS FOR MOONSHINE? THAT'S ILLEGAL! ER--HOW MUCH DO YOU GET FOR A KETTLE, MR. CARSON?



THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR A BIG ONE! THAT'S A LOT OF MONEY, BUT AFTER ALL THEY GET TWENTY DOLLARS A GALLON DOWN IN FORT BRAGG FOR CREOSOTE!

SEEMS TO ME YOU'RE IN THE WRONG END OF THE BUSINESS, MR. CARSON!



YOU WOULDN'T BE AIMING TO GO INTO THE MOONSHINE BUSINESS YOURSELF, WOULD YOU?

I HADN'T EVER THOUGHT OF IT! BUT IF I EVER DO, I'D TAKE THIS SAME EQUIPMENT AND MAKE THE BEST CORN WHISKEY IN NORTH CAROLINA!





BUT IN SPITE OF THIS FATEFUL WARNING, MARSH
CONTINUED AT HIS RISKY OCCUPATION!





A MOMENT LATER, A WELL-PLACED BULLET EXPLODED THE BOILER!



THAT NIGHT MAGGIE FOUND MARSH HIDING OUT IN AN OLD CONFEDERATE FORT IN THE HILLS!



MARSH, THAT FEDERAL AGENT, RIMMER—HE'S DEAD! AND THEY'RE SAYING YOU KILLED HIM!

RIMMER DEAD? BUT, MAG—I DIDN'T DO IT!



HERE, THIS IS FOR YOU FROM YOUR FATHER! I PROMISED I'D BRING IT! HE THINKS YOU OUGHT TO GET OUT OF THE COUNTRY!

FROM DAD? THE WORLD NEVER LOOKS SO GOOD —AND THINGS NEVER SEEM SO CLEAR—AS WHEN YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE!



THAT NIGHT MARSH GAVE HIMSELF UP TO THE LAW: THE TRIAL THAT FOLLOWED LASTED FOR MONTHS—A TRIAL THAT FAYETTEVILLE COUNTY WILL NEVER FORGET!



BUT MARSH'S BASIC HONESTY, AND THE LACK OF PROOF IMPRESSED THE JURY!

YOUR HONOR, AFTER FOUR DAYS OF DELIBERATION WE ARE UNABLE TO REACH A VERDICT!



LATER, IN THE JUDGE'S CHAMBER, MARSH AND HIS FAMILY LISTEN TO A PROPOSITION FROM THE STATE'S ATTORNEY:

GENTLEMEN, TO SAVE THE COST OF A SECOND TRIAL, THE STATE WILL ACCEPT A PLEA OF GUILTY TO MURDER IN THE SECOND DEGREE!

NO! NOTHING WAS SAID AT THE TRIAL TO PROVE MY SON GUILTY; WE WANT A SECOND TRIAL!



BUT MR. WILLIAMS, WE MUST BE REALISTIC; WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN A SECOND TRIAL. NO TWO JURIES ARE ALIKE! AT LEAST A PLEA OF SECOND DEGREE WOULD ELIMINATE THE DANGER OF THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!

THE ELECTRIC CHAIR! OH, NO!



WHERE WOULD THE MONEY COME FROM FOR A SECOND TRIAL, DAD?

I -- I'M SELLING A PIECE OF LAND!



I CAN'T HAVE YOU SELLING THE FARM BECAUSE OF ME! I'LL PLEAD GUILTY TO MURDER IN THE SECOND DEGREE!

DON'T LET YOUR PRIDE STAND IN THE WAY, MARSH! IT'S ONLY LAND! WE CAN PAY IT BACK! YOUR WAY WE'LL ALL BE PAYING FOR YEARS!

IT'S MY NECK AND MY DECISION!

THEY WON'T GIVE HIM MORE THAN FIFTEEN YEARS!



BUT AT THE SENTENCING A NEW AND UNSYMPATHETIC JUDGE THREW THE BOOK AT MARSH!

AND I SENTENCE YOU, MARSH WILLIAMS, TO IMPRISONMENT AT HARD LABOR FOR A PERIOD OF THIRTY YEARS!



THIRTY YEARS! OH, NO!

ON HIS WAY TO PRISON A KINDLY SHERIFF PERMITTED MARSH TO SAY GOODBYE TO HIS FAMILY!



MARSH! LOOK AT ME! PLEASE DON'T LOOK AWAY! YOU SAID YOU WOULDN'T STAY MARRIED TO A CRIMINAL! I'VE TALKED TO THE LAWYERS, MAG! THEY'LL ARRANGE A DIVORCE!



YOU'RE MY HUSBAND, MARSH! I'LL WAIT NO MATTER HOW LONG IT IS! BUT PROMISE ME ONE THING: YOU MUSTN'T TRY TO ESCAPE!



I PROMISE, MAGGIE. I'LL DO MY TIME!



Soon...



IN THOSE YEARS PRISON CONDITIONS WERE BRUTAL! WALLED IN WITH HARDENED CRIMINALS, THE GUARDS FELT THAT THEY MUST FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE! IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE MARSH WAS IN TROUBLE!

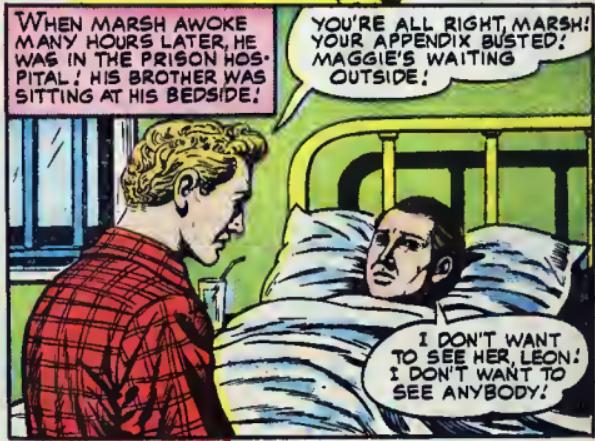


HEY, YOU!
STOP LOAFING! GET
BUSY WITH THE HAMMER!

OH, MY SIDE!
I'VE GOT A
PAIN!

A PAIN?
HERE?







AS THE ALARM SPREAD, THE GUARDS HELD A GENERAL INSPECTION AND SEARCHED FOR HIDDEN WEAPONS!

HERE'S ANOTHER ONE WITH A KNIFE! PUT HIM WITH THE OTHERS!



OKAY, WILLIAMS! LIFT YOUR HANDS! I'M GOING TO SEARCH THAT BANDAGE ON YOUR OPERATION!

TAKE IT EASY, MOBLEY! YOU WERE WRONG ABOUT THIS GUY ONCE!



I TOLD YOU — I KNOW THESE RATS!

ALL RIGHT, TAKE HIM AWAY WITH THE OTHERS!

THE CHAIN GANG CAN'T BE AS BAD AS THEY SAY, CAN IT, HODGES?

YOU'LL FIND OUT, MARSH! I WAS ON IT ONCE! BRRRRR!



THE NEXT DAY A GROUP OF PRISONERS WAS LINED UP IN THE COURTYARD!

IT'S GRADUATION DAY, MEN! WE HATE TO SEE YOU GO! BUT YOU ASKED FOR TROUBLE AND YOU'RE GOING TO GET IT! ON THE CHAIN GANG!



THE THOUGHT OF THE CHAIN GANG DROVE HODGES TO DESPERATION! AND AS THE PRISON TRAIN MOVED ACROSS THE COUNTRYSIDE...

ALL RIGHT, MEN, THE GUARD JUST WENT INTO THE WASH-ROOM! THIS IS OUR CHANCE TO MAKE A BREAK!

NOT ME, HODGES! I'M STAYING!





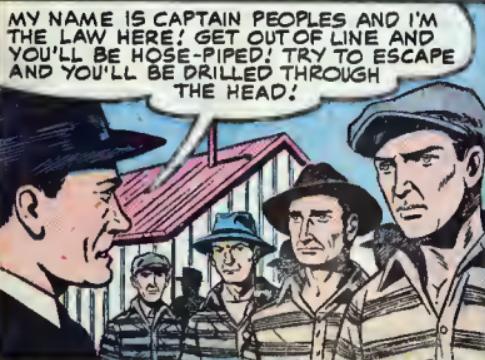
AT THAT MOMENT, THE ESCAPING PRISONERS WERE CUT OFF!



THAT'S ONE YOU OWE ME, HODGES! I SAVED YOU FROM GETTING SHOT FULL OF LEAD!



IT WAS AT THE CALEDONIA PRISON FARM THAT MARSH MET THE MAN WHO WOULD INFLUENCE HIS LIFE FOR YEARS TO COME!



IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, MARSH WILLIAMS FOUND OUT WITH SAVAGE INTIMACY ABOUT THE BRUTAL LIFE ON THE CHAIN GANG!



AND IN THOSE LONG BITTER WEEKS, MARSH SANK EVER DEEPER INTO A SULLEN AND RESENTFUL MOOD! ONE DAY AT MAIL CALL...



A FEW MOMENTS LATER, CAPTAIN PEOPLES WAS ADDRESSING THE ASSEMBLED PRISONERS.

NEW DIRECTIVES FROM THE STATE PRISON BOARD! "A" GRADE MEN ARE TO BE ALLOWED WITHOUT CHAINS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE! AND ONCE A YEAR A TRUSTEE GETS TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OUTSIDE WITH HIS WIFE!

YOU HEARD IT, MEN, BUT DON'T GET THE IDEA THAT THIS IS BEING TURNED INTO A COUNTRY CLUB! WE STILL HAVE OUR GUNS AND HOSE-PIPE!

SUDDENLY MARSH TURNS AWAY AND...

I FIGURED YOU'D SAID EVERYTHING YOU HAD ON YOUR MIND!

THERE'S ROOM FOR ONLY ONE SELF-MINDED MAN IN THIS CAMP! AND THAT'S ME! TAKE CARE OF WILLIAMS, MEN! I THINK HE'S THIRSTY!

YES, SIR!

DRINK THAT AND FAST, IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!

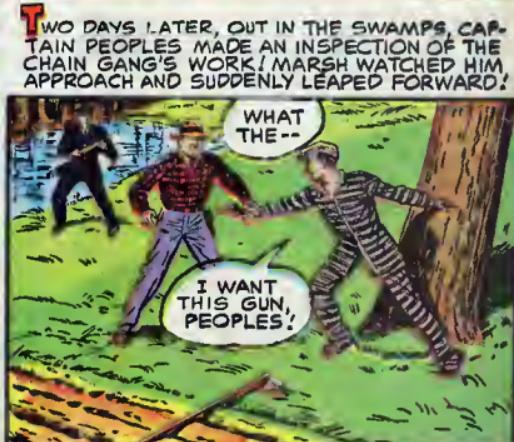
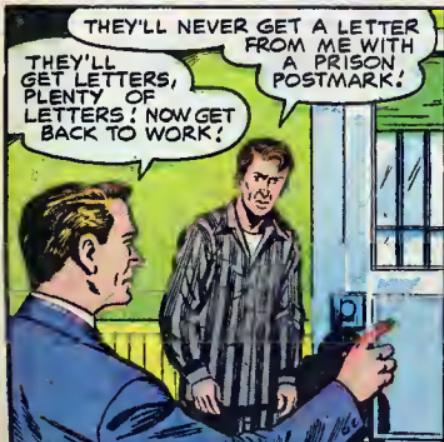
AND AFTER THIS, I WANT TO SEE YOU SHAVED EVERY DAY! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

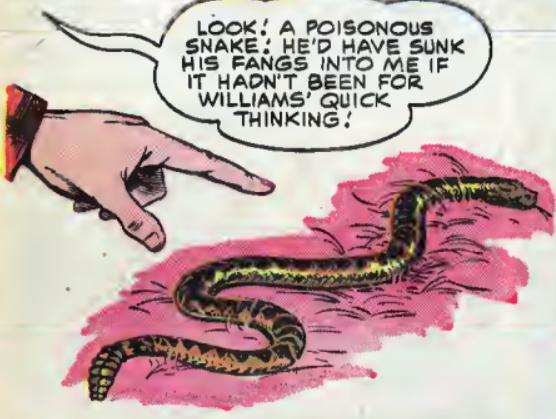
YES, SIR!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER MARSH HAD ANOTHER RUN-IN WITH CAPTAIN PEOPLES.

WILLIAMS, YOU'RE FORGETTING TO WRITE TO YOUR FAMILY!

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS A LAW, OR ANYONE'S CONCERN BUT MINE!





A FEW MINUTES LATER, MARSH REPORTED TO THE MESS HALL...

I COULDN'T HELP BEING LATE, CAPTAIN! HODGES GOT SICK!

IT WAS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS! WE'VE GOT DOCTORS! THIS MIGHT COST YOU YOUR "B" GRADE!

I GET "B" GRADE FOR SAVING A MAN FROM A RATTLESNAKE — AND I LOSE IT FOR HELPING A MAN WITH MALARIA!

NO BACK-JAWING! DO YOU WANT A STRETCH IN SOLITARY?



I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG! IF YOU THINK I GOT IT COMING — GET IT OVER WITH!

WILLIAMS, EVERY MAN IN THIS ROOM IS WATCHING US! YOU'VE GOT ME CORNERED! THERE'S NOTHING ELSE I CAN DO!



PUT HIM IN THE HOLE, GUARDS. KEEP HIM IN SOLITARY TILL HE BEGS TO COME OUT!

YES, SIR!



THE HOLE! SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN A TIGHT, NARROW CELL, PURGATORY IN PERPETUAL DARKNESS WITH NOTHING TO LIVE ON BUT BREAD AND WATER! IN THE LONG DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, MARSH WILLIAMS DRAINED HIS CUP OF BITTERNESS TO THE DREGS!



BUT FOR MANY WEEKS MARSH'S STUBBORN COURAGE REFUSED TO ALLOW HIM TO BEG FOR MERCY! THEN ONE DAY, THE PRISON DOCTOR REPORTED TO THE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE!

I'LL BREAK HIM, DOC! I'VE HAD TOUGHER THAN HIM BEFORE!

BUT NONE OF THEM COULD TAKE MORE THAN SEVEN DAYS IN SOLITARY! WILLIAMS HAS BEEN IN THERE THIRTY! HE CAN'T STAY ALIVE MUCH LONGER!

I WANTED HIM TO BEG FOR MERCY, BUT, WELL — IF YOU WANT TO ORDER HIS REMOVAL I WON'T OPPOSE IT! I WONDER WHAT MAKES THAT GUY TICK?

IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO FIND OUT! I'LL WRITE OUT THE ORDER FOR HIS RELEASE!

IT WAS TWO DAYS LATER BEFORE MARSH WAS PHYSICALLY ABLE TO REPORT TO THE CAPTAIN.

WILLIAMS, I PUT YOU IN SOLITARY BECAUSE YOU BACK-JAWED ME IN FRONT OF THE MEN!

ALL RIGHT, CAPTAIN! MAYBE NOW YOU'LL LISTEN TO MY SIDE OF THINGS!



I'M NOT ONE OF THEM! I'M NO CRIMINAL!

YOU PLEADED GUILTY TO MURDER! IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR YOUR STILL THAT REVENUE AGENT WOULDN'T BE DEAD!

BUT THEY DIDN'T PROVE I DID IT! THIRTY YEARS WITHOUT ANY PROOF—THAT'S NOT FAIR!

THAT'S WHAT YOUR WIFE SAYS IN THESE LETTERS! IT ISN'T FAIR YOUR REFUSING TO SEE YOUR FAMILY, OR ANSWER THEIR LETTERS!



YOU SET A NEW RECORD IN SOLITARY, WILLIAMS! YOU CAN TAKE IT PHYSICALLY—BUT THAT'S ALL YOU CAN DO!

DO YOU THINK IT'S BECAUSE I WANT IT THIS WAY?

YOUR WIFE DOESN'T WANT IT THIS WAY EITHER! SHE WANTS TO SEE YOU, TALK TO YOU! SHE'S OUTSIDE WAITING!

MAGGIE HERE! I CAN'T LET HER SEE ME LIKE THIS!



WILLIAMS, I'M GOING OUT ON A LIMB FOR YOU! I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU TWENTY-FOUR HOURS ON THE OUTSIDE—WITHOUT CHAINS!

NEVER MIND THAT! DO YOU PROMISE TO COME BACK AFTER YOUR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS?

BUT—I'M NOT A TRUSTY!

I'LL COME BACK!

AND SO MARSH WILLIAMS WALKED THROUGH THE PRISON GATES FOR HIS PITIFUL TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF FREEDOM!

BUT, MAG—WHY DIDN'T YOU DO LIKE I TOLD YOU? WHY DIDN'T YOU GET A DIVORCE? I TOOK YOU UNTIL DEATH DO US PART—REMEMBER?

I'M DEAD! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? DEAD FOR THIRTY YEARS... I'LL BE AN OLD MAN WHEN I GET OUT— IF I GET OUT!

OH, MARSH, DON'T PUSH ME AWAY! DON'T YOU LOVE ME—WANT ME?

WHAT GOOD IS LOVING YOU ONE DAY A YEAR! WHAT GOOD IS BREATHING FRESH AIR ONE DAY A YEAR? IT'S BETTER BEING DEAD!

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE! YOU DON'T HAVE TO GIVE UP HOPING! I HAVEN'T, AND I'M IN PRISON TOO, WITHOUT YOU!

MAG, DARLING!

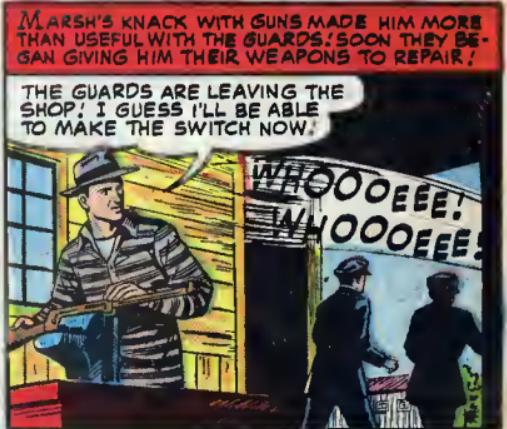
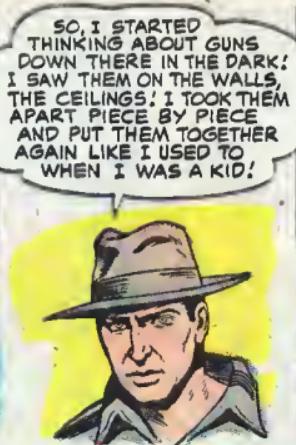
MARSH, IT WON'T BE FOREVER!

MARSH'S SKILL WITH TOOLS HAD IMPRESSED CAPTAIN PEOPLES AND WHEN MARSH RETURNED TO PRISON HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE BLACKSMITH SHOP!

THERE'S THE WHISTLE FOR THE FREE PERIOD! GUESS I'LL WORK ON THIS DRAWING FOR A WHILE!

WHOOOEE!

JUST A MINUTE, WILLIAMS! LET ME SEE THAT!





WELL, I SUPPOSE I'LL BE ABLE TO FIX UP THE BEEF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, CAPTAIN! I'VE GOT SOMETHING BRAND NEW, DIFFERENT! TAKE THIS PISTON ---

THE PISTON ON EVERY OTHER GUN TRAVELS THREE AND A HALF INCHES! I'M TRYING TO MAKE ONE THAT WON'T TRAVEL EVEN A TENTH OF AN INCH!

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

IF I TOLD YOU I MADE THIS GUN OUT OF AN OLD TRACTOR AXLE AND A FENCE POST WITHOUT ANY MACHINE OR LATHE— JUST A FILE—WOULD YOU THINK IT POSSIBLE?

ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN! YOU CAN WORK IN THE SMITHY!



BUT YOU CAN'T HAVE THE GUN! I WON'T TAKE ANY CHANCES ON A BREAK!

OKAY, CAPTAIN! BUT I'M GOING TO BE HONEST WITH YOU; I'M GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE ANOTHER GUN, THEN!



I GUESS YOU WIN AGAIN, BUT REMEMBER YOU'RE TO WORK ON IT ONLY IN YOUR FREE TIME!

I'LL REMEMBER!



IN THE LONG MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, MARSH TOILED DEVOTEDLY ON HIS GUN! THE MONTHS BECAME YEARS AND STILL HE WORKED ON!



AND THEN, ONE DAY THE NEWS LEAKED OUT....



IN A MATTER OF DAYS, THE STATE PRISON BOARD CALLED CAPTAIN PEOPLES TO ACCOUNT!

LOOK AT THESE HEADLINES! THEY'VE MADE THIS BOARD THE LAUGHING STOCK OF THIS COUNTRY!

GENTLEMEN, I DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER THAT NEWSPAPER BUNK! I LET WILLIAMS MAKE THAT GUN BECAUSE I REALLY BELIEVE WILLIAMS HAS SOMETHING NEW!

WE'LL HAVE NO MORE OF THAT NONSENSE! I'VE HEARD ENOUGH ABOUT WILLIAMS AND HIS GUN!

GENTLEMEN, WILLIAMS IS OUTSIDE WAITING TO SHOW YOU THE GUN HIMSELF! --UNLESS YOU'RE AFRAID HE'LL CONVINCE YOU, TOO!

WELL, AS LONG AS HE'S HERE, WE'LL HAVE A LOOK AT IT!

FAIR ENOUGH!

MOMENTS LATER, MARSH WAS TRYING TO CONVINCE THE BOARD.

GENTLEMEN, MY GUN IS FINISHED! I WANT YOU TO LET ME PROVE IT WORKS!

SO YOU THINK WE'LL LET YOU LOOSE WITH A GUN AND BULLETS, DO YOU?

I'VE BEEN LOOSE WITH A FILE AND HACKSAW FOR YEARS! PLEASE, SIR, WOULD YOU LOOK AT THIS MECHANISM? TWENTY-FIVE PARTS IN THERE AND ALL MADE BY HAND!

NOT BAD! AND IT SEEMS MIGHTY LIGHT!

I FOUND OUT HOW TO MAKE A GUN FIVE POUNDS LIGHTER THAN EVER BEFORE! IT'S BECAUSE OF MY FLOATING CHAMBER!

HE MEANS THIS PART: EVERY AUTOMATIC KICKS BACK THREE AND A HALF INCHES, BUT THIS PISTON MOVES LESS THAN A TENTH OF AN INCH! HE CALLS IT A FLOATING CHAMBER!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS WOULD MEAN IN WAR, SIR? EVERY MAN COULD CARRY FIVE POUNDS MORE OF ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT THAN HE DOES NOW!

WE'RE NOT RUNNING

AN ARMS FACTORY! BESESIDES IF WE LET HIM TEST THIS GUN, HOW DO WE KNOW HE WON'T TURN IT ON YOU AND YOUR MEN?

GENTLEMEN, WILLIAMS HAS TWENTY-TWO YEARS LEFT! IF HE ESCAPES, I'LL SERVE OUT THE REST OF HIS TERM!

WELL, ALL RIGHT! UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS I SUPPOSE WE'LL HAVE TO LET HIM TEST THAT GUN!

AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, WITH MAGGIE AND HIS FATHER AMONG THE ONLOOKERS, MARSH WILLIAMS TESTED HIS GUN.

ALL RIGHT, WILLIAMS, I'VE POUNDED IT INTO THE MUD!

GOOD! I GUESS WE'LL ALL AGREE THAT THIS CREATES THE WORST BATTLE CONDITIONS!

QUICKLY, MARSH WIPED THE GUN AND THEN...

HE HIT THE TARGET DEAD CENTER!

BANG!

AND AFTER ALL THE ABUSE THAT GUN GOT!

CONGRATULATIONS, MARSH! OH, BY THE WAY, I WANT YOU TO MEET GEORGE MITCHELL OF THE WINCHESTER REPEATING ARMS COMPANY!

WINCHESTER? THAT'S A MIGHTY IMPORTANT OUTFIT!

CAPTAIN PEOPLES INVITED ME DOWN: AND AFTER WHAT I'VE SEEN OF YOUR GUN, I'D SAY YOUR SHORT-STROKE PISTON MAY MAKE YOU AS FAMOUS AS GARAND OR BROWNING!

BUT THEY'RE GREAT GUN-MAKERS! I JUST FOOL AROUND!

KEEP FOOLING AROUND, WILLIAMS! YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING NO ONE EVER DREAMED WAS POSSIBLE—AN AUTOMATIC GUN WITH A FLOATING CHAMBER!

WELL, IF YOU THINK IT'S THAT GOOD, I'LL KEEP WORKING ON IT!

AND WE'LL KEEP WORKING ON YOUR PARDON FROM THE GOVERNOR!

MAGGIE--DAD!!



YES, CLAUDE WILLIAMS KEPT WORKING ON THE GOVERNOR—AND WITH THE PUBLICITY OF THE GUN TESTS—AND THE HELP OF A STRONG LETTER FROM CAPTAIN PEOPLES, IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE MARSH WILLIAMS RECEIVED A FULL PARDON!



HE BUILT A MACHINE GUN THAT COULD USE THE SAME .22 CALIBRE CARTRIDGE, AND SAVED THE ARMY A FORTUNE WHEN THEY BEGAN TO TRAIN MACHINE GUNNERS!



BUT MARSH'S FINEST WORK WAS HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE M1, THE FIRST CARBINE TO BE ADAPTED TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN FORTY YEARS!



ON THE QUIET OF THE PRISON OFFICE, YOUNG DAVID WILLIAMS LISTENED IN RAPT ATTENTION AS CAP PEOPLES FINISHED HIS STORY.

THERE'S THE GUN, DAVID! EIGHT MILLION OF THEM WENT TO WAR AND YOUR DAD HAD A LARGE SHARE IN DEVELOPING THEM!

I SEE!

YES, DAVID, PRISONS WERE TOUGH IN THOSE YEARS, BUT THERE HAVE BEEN MANY REFORMS SINCE THEN. BECAUSE OF MEN LIKE YOUR FATHER WE LEARNED HOW TO HANDLE OUR PRISONERS, AND HOW TO MAKE THEM BETTER MEN!

THAT'S WHAT I KNOW OF YOUR FATHER, DAVID, BUT I CAN ONLY TELL YOU ABOUT HIM! I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW TO FEEL! THAT'S UP TO YOU!

I UNDERSTAND AND—THANK YOU, SIR!

MOMENTS AFTERWARD, IN THE PRISON COURTYARD...

WELL, SON, ANYTHING ELSE YOU WANT TO ASK ME?

NO, SIR! I GUESS ALL MY QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED!

DAVID

PEOPLES

LET'S GO HOME, DAD!





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